

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) An IR dryer, for use in drying a continuous paper web by means of IR radiation, comprising:
 - an array of IR emitters arranged, in use, in spaced relation to the paper web;
 - a lamp protection plate intermediate the IR emitters and the paper web;characterized in that at least one of the lamp protection plate and the array of IR emitters is curved ~~whereby drying~~ wherein a paper web which moves is moved in a curved path is ~~facilitated to dry the paper web and wherein at least one of the lamp protection plate and array of~~ IR emitters is curved in a direction of the curved path.
2. (Original) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of said IR emitters is a lamp comprising a heating element located within a curved quartz tube.
3. (Original) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of said IR emitters is gas-powered.
4. (Previously Amended) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 1 wherein said lamp protection plate comprises an array of curved quartz tubes.
5. (Previously Amended) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 4 wherein said lamp protection plate is cooled, in use, by the passage of gas through said curved quartz tubes.
6. (Previously Amended) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a curved reflector plate.
7. (Currently Amended) An IR dryer, for use in drying a continuous paper web by means of IR radiation, comprising:

an array of IR emitters arranged, in use, in spaced relation to the paper web, said array of IR emitters comprising a plurality of first quartz tubes and each tube having an IR heating element therein;

a lamp protection plate intermediate the IR emitters and the paper web;
~~characterized in that the said lamp protection plate comprises a~~ comprising a second
plurality of quartz tubes arranged in an array.

8. (Currently Amended) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 7 wherein the lamp protection plate is cooled in use, by the passage of gas through said second plurality of quartz tubes.

9. Cancelled.

10. (Currently Amended) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 7 wherein at least one of said first and second ~~said~~ quartz tubes are curved.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of bending an elongate quartz tube comprising the steps of:

supporting the tube in a substantially vertical orientation;

gripping the tube near its uppermost end;

heating the tube at region intermediate its lowermost end and the uppermost end;

providing a pivot arm to grip the tube at the uppermost end; and

moving the gripped uppermost end of the tube by rotating the pivot arm thereby pulling said uppermost end so that the tube, softened in the vicinity of the heating region, is bent.

12. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the gripped uppermost end of the tube is moved in an arc.

13. (Previously Amended) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the tube is counterbalanced.

14. (Previously Amended) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the lowermost end of the tube is constrained to move in a substantially vertical path.

15. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for bending an elongate quartz tube comprising:
support means for supporting the tube in a substantially vertical orientation, said support means including a follower attached to a lowermost end of said tube;
gripping means for gripping the tube near its uppermost end;
heating means situated at a region intermediate the lowermost end and the uppermost end of the tube; and
~~driving~~rotating means for rotating and moving the gripped uppermost end of the tube, in use, so that the tube, softened in the vicinity of the heating means, is bent as the rotating means pulls the tubes.

16. (Original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 wherein the heating means substantially surrounds the tube, in use.

17. (Previously Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 wherein the heating means comprises a plurality of gas burners.

18. (Previously Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 17 wherein the plurality of gas burners comprises a ring of gas burners, in the center of which the tube is situated, in use.

19. (Previously Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 further comprising barrier means which has a curved surface against which the tube abuts so as to prevent lateral movement of the tube.

20. (Original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 19 wherein the barrier means comprises a wheel.

21. (Previously Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 20 wherein the wheel is removable and replaceable with a wheel of different diameter.

22. (Previously Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 further comprising a counter-balance arrangement by means of which the lowermost end of the tube can be constrained in use, to follow a substantially vertical path.

23. (Currently Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 wherein said ~~driving~~ rotating means comprises a pivotable arm, at one end of which is situated said gripping means, the arm being pivotable, in use, so that the gripping means generally describes an arc.

24. (Previously Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 23 wherein a pivot point of said pivotable arm is, in use, substantially horizontally level with a desired region of bending of the tube.

25. (Previously Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 23 wherein said pivotable arm is driven by a motor.

26. (Previously Amended) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15 wherein said gripping means is water-cooled.

27-28. Cancelled

29. (Currently Amended) An IR dryer for drying a continuous web of paper comprising:

a drying cylinder for moving the web of paper;

an array of curved lamps spaced from the cylinder, each of which lamps includes an IR heating element located within a corresponding curved quartz tube, said array of curved lamps being curved in a direction of a curved path of the paper on the cylinder; and

a curved lamp protection element comprising a plurality of quartz tubes placed between said web of paper and said array of curved lamps.

30. (Previously Amended) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 29 further including a curved reflector plate.

31. Cancelled.

32. (Previously Presented) An IR dryer as claimed in claim 29, wherein:
said lamp protection element comprises a plurality of additional quartz tubes arranged side by side and adjacent tubes of said plurality of additional quartz tubes being in contact with one another thereby forming a continuous curved lamp protection element.

33. (Previously Presented) An IR dryer, as claimed in claim 32, wherein:
said plurality of additional quartz tubes have a longitudinal axis extending in a same direction as movement of the web of paper.

34. (Previously Presented) An IR dryer, as claimed in claim 29, wherein:
said array of curved lamps has a longitudinal axis extending in a same direction as movement of the web paper.